

As a computer expert and long time user of high-speed Internet access both at home and at work, I have broad experience with a variety of ISPs including both RBOCs and small/medium independent ISPs. I am also a former employee of an RBOC.

Based on my experience I am firmly convinced that RBOCs provide overpriced, inferior service to their customers.

In contrast I have found that small and medium sized ISPs provide better reliability, better tech support, and often better pricing than RBOCs. Their professionalism and responsiveness to customer needs and new opportunities is measurably superior to RBOC service. The more experienced and knowledgeable a customer is, the more likely they are to switch from an RBOC to smaller ISP.

Left to their own devices, RBOCs would still be providing "high speed" dialup service and ISDN instead DSL. It is only innovation and competition from smaller companies that have led to major improvements in overall service. We cannot accurately predict what will happen as future generations of technology become available. But we can predict that without competition the RBOCs will stagnate and fail to adopt it.

I strongly urge you to protect the future of our telecommunications infrastructure and international competitiveness by preventing any regulatory action that would reduce competition or hurt smaller ISPs that are most often the source of innovation in our country.